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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/697,082

10/31/2003

Kazuo Okada

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EXAMINER

THOMASSON, MEAGAN J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3714

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

04/14/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/697,082	Applicant(s) OKADA, KAZUO	
	Examiner MEAGAN THOMASSON	Art Unit 3714	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 January 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 4-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 4-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 June 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on January 23, 2008 has been entered.

Response to Amendment

The examiner acknowledges the amendments made to claims 4,7,9. Claims 4-12 are pending in this application, claims 1-3 have been canceled.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

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1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

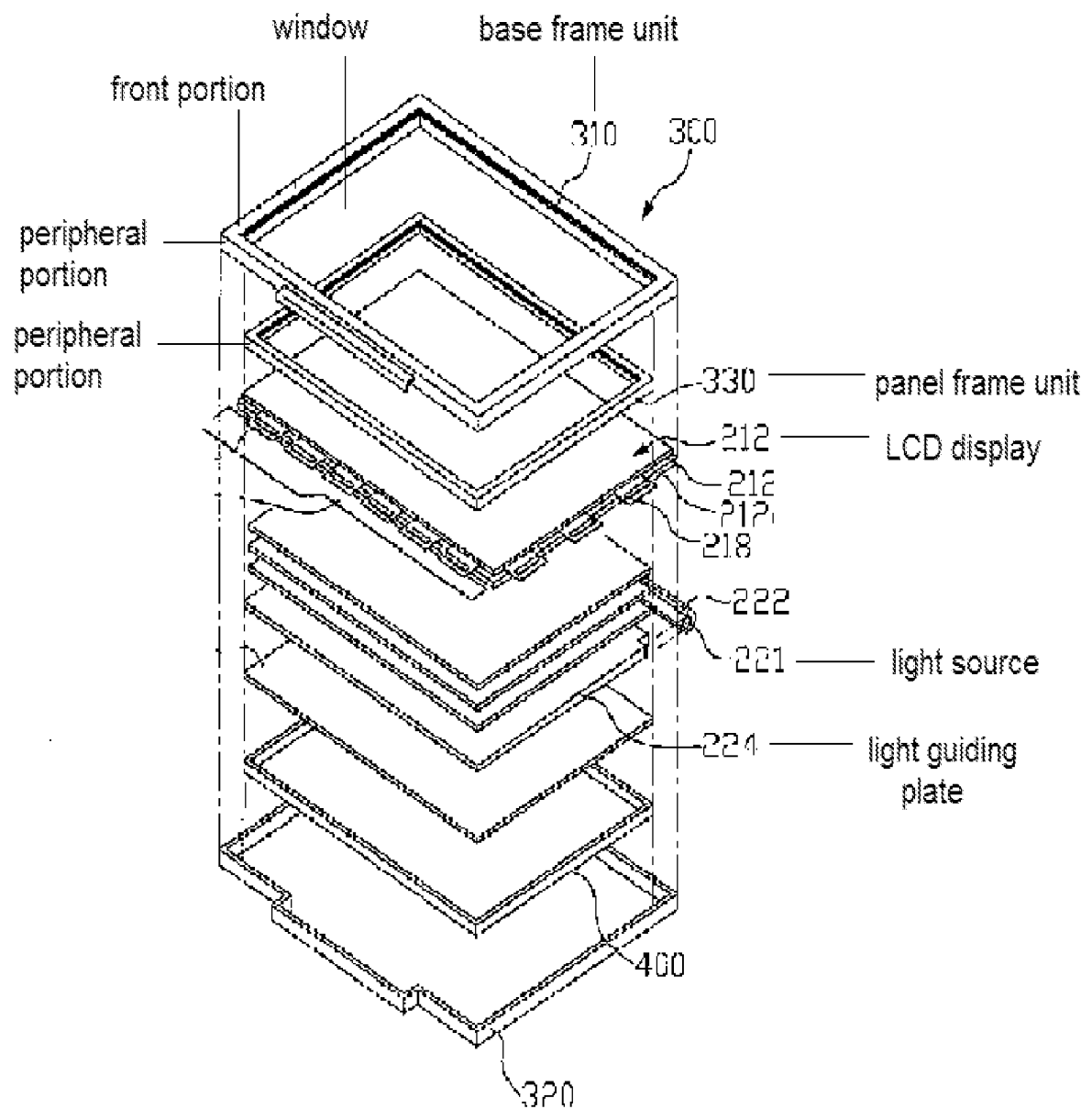
Claims 4-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Loose et al. (US 6,517,433 B2) in view of Joeng (US 2003/0016313 A1).

Regarding claims 4 and 9, Loose discloses a gaming machine featuring a variable display device for variably displaying symbols (i.e. a slot machine having a spinning reel display) and a front display device disposed in front of the variable display device, wherein the front display device includes a liquid crystal display panel through which the variable display device is able to be seen (Fig. 2a, display area 16 comprising LCD display element 14a, disposed in front of spinning reels 12a). Loose discloses the LCD display panel is attached to the front of the gaming machine (Fig. 2a). *Loose does not disclose the specific components of the liquid crystal display screen, including a light guiding plate for guiding light emitted from a light source, a panel frame having a peripheral portion and a front portion to form a receiving recess sized to receive the liquid crystal display panel and the light guiding plate thereby forming a panel frame unit surrounding the liquid crystal display panel and the light guiding plate with the panel frame front portion defining a panel frame window, and a base frame having a peripheral portion and front portion to form a receiving recess sized to receive the panel frame unit surrounding the panel frame peripheral portion in a facially opposing manner and attached to the front of the gaming machine.* In Fig. 6 of US 2003/0016313 (see Fig. 6 below), Joeng discloses a liquid crystal display device, comprising a liquid crystal

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panel (212) and a light guiding plate (224) housed together in a single panel frame component, referred to by Joeng as a chassis (330). This panel frame element (330), or chassis, clearly shows a peripheral component, i.e. the outer border, and a front portion, i.e. the front face of the panel frame element, wherein the front portion features a cutout display window. Additionally, Joeng discloses a base frame element (300, further comprising elements 310 and 320), referred to by Joeng as a case. The base frame, i.e. case, element (300) comprises a peripheral component, i.e. the outer border, and a front portion, i.e. the front face of the base frame element, wherein the front portion features a cutout window that generally corresponds with the panel frame window. Further, as shown by the dashed lines indicating the alignment of the LCD device components, the base frame window contacts the panel frame front portion in a facially opposing manner, that is back of the base frame window face contacts the front of the panel frame window face. (Note: the elements of Joeng Fig. 6 have been re-labeled using applicant's own claim language to clarify the examiner's interpretation of the elements described).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the LCD panel disposed in front of slot machine reels, as taught by Loose, with the LCD panel mounting configuration including a base frame and a panel frame, as taught by Joeng, as all of the claimed elements were known in the art at the time of the invention and one of ordinary skill could have combined the elements using known methods in order to yield predictable results.



Joeng Fig. 6

Regarding claims 5 and 11, wherein said variable display means is one or more rotatable reels each having a reel band thereon, on which said designs are drawn, see Loose Fig. 1.

Regarding claims 6 and 12, wherein the reel-based gaming machine is a slot machine, see Loose Fig. 1.

Regarding claim 7, Loose discloses a transparent plate disposed in front of and in contact with the LCD display device in the form of a touch screen in col. 2, lines 48-51. While Loose does not specifically disclose the transparent plate is in front of the base frame, as Loose is silent regarding the inclusion of a base frame, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to mount the transparent plate, i.e. the touch screen, in front of the base frame unit as Loose discloses mounting the plate in front of the entire LCD display device, which would presumably include a mounting frame of some sort.

Regarding claims 8 and 9, Fig. 6 of Joeng discloses the front display device further comprises a liquid crystal holder 400 for holding a periphery of the liquid crystal display panel 212 (¶0073). Joeng does not specifically disclose the liquid crystal holder disposed between the liquid crystal display panel 212 and the light guiding plate 224. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to provide the liquid crystal display holder in any location within the liquid crystal display device 100 that most effectively holds the liquid crystal display panel in place relative to the other components.

Regarding claims 9 and 10, Joeng/ Loose do not specifically disclose the use of an anti-static sheet covering the opening of the rear holder wherein the antistatic sheet is adhered to the rear holder with double-sided tape. However, the inclusion of antistatic sheets in display devices, including liquid crystal display devices, is well known in the art and thus it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include an antistatic components as evidenced by Sato (US 6,734,927 B2) in col. 5, line 1 – col. 6, line 5. Thus, the inclusion of an antistatic sheet and the method of fastening said antistatic sheet in the liquid crystal display device does not render the instant invention new, novel or unobvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed January 23, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Specifically, applicant argues that the newly amended claim limitations are not sufficiently taught by the combination of Loose and Joeng. The examiner does not find this argument to be persuasive for the reasons outlined in the above rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MEAGAN THOMASSON whose telephone number is (571)272-2080. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 830-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Xuan Thai can be reached on (571) 272-7147. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Meagan Thomasson
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